to the corresponding period of the previous year. This is higher than the export target of 12% fixed for the current financial year.

However, export Promotion being a constant endeavour of the Government various initiatives have been launched to enhance the export growth which include introduction of new schemes like Assistance to State for Infrastructure Development for Export (ASIDE), establishing Agri Economic Zones, Market Access Initiative, strengthening and adding new features to the Special Economic Zones, 'Focus Africa' Programme, etc.

Export of Basmati Rice to US

485. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that due to discriminatory yardsticks of the US administration export of Basmati Rice to US has reduced significantly during the period from April to October, 2002 as compared to the corresponding period of 2001;

(b) whether it is a fact that preference is being given to the import from Pakistan; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard and the steps proposed to be taken to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE INTHE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) to (c)The total quantity and value of export of basmati rice to USA during the period April-October and April-November, 2002 over the corresponding period last year is as under:-

Period	Qty. (MT)	Value (Rs. crores)
April-October, 2002 (Prov.)	18285	67.39
April-October, 2001 (Prov.)	19709	66.43
April-November, 2002 (Prov.)	22283	74.61
April-November, 2001 (Prov.)	20511	69.41

(SOURCE: DGCI&S, Calcutta)

The above data shows that the decrease during April-October 2002 is nominal only in quantitative terms whereas in value terms export of Basmati Rice to US has shown marginal increase as compared to

corresponding period last year. During the period April-November 2002 Export of Basmati Rice to U.S. has increase both in quantitative and value terms as compared to corresponding period last year.

India remains that largest exporter of Basmati Rice to the USA.The slight decline in export of Basmati rice during the period April-October 2002 is due to overall decline of import of Basmati rice in U.S. The Government is not aware of any restrictions imposed by the U.S. Government on imports of Basmati rice from India or of any preference to other countires, including Pakistan.

Progress in WTO negotiations

486. DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made in WTO negotiations following the launching of Doha round;

(b) whether there has been retrogression in implementing the Doha declaration regarding issues of public health and their compatibility with theTRIPS agreement; and

(c) the assessment of Government regarding the likely improvement in the market access for the agricultural export?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) In accordance with the mandate provided in the Doha Ministerial Declaration, negotiations on various issues included in the Doha Work Programme are taking place in the relevant WTO negotiating/regular bodies. In respect of most of the issues covered by the Doha Work Programme the progress has been uneven. Inparticular, the deadlines given by the Ministers on three issues of importance to the developing countries, namely, TRIPS and Public Health; Special and DifferentialTreatment; and the Implementation-related issues and concerns could not be adhered to. India and other developing countries have strongly voiced their concerns in the WTO on the slow progress of the negotiations in these areas.